

ABSTRACT

A method is disclosed for providing a loaner car to a customer. In this method, the customer is provided with an appointment book maintained by the service center through a machine connected to a distributed computer network. The customer schedules a service 5 appointment in the electronic appointment book and is prompted for a loaner car request. If the customer requests a loaner car, the request is pre-approved, a code for releasing car keys to the loaner car is established or received and then provided to the customer for opening a secure a lock box located at the service center. The car keys to the loaner car are released to the customer upon entry of the code at the lock box.